GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:784
ANSWERED ON:26.02.2001
DAMAGE DUE TO EARTHQUAKE IN GUJARAT
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the extent of loss/damage suffered by the Telecommunication /Postal system due to recent earthquake in Gujarat;

(b) whether the communication and postal systems have paralysed completely in the affected cities;

(c) the time by which the said systems are likely to be provided;

(d) the compensation and assistance provided to the affected employees of the Ministry; and

(e) the concrete measures being taken by the Government to combat such natural calamity in future?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR)

Reply for Telecommunication System.

(a) The extent of loss suffered by Telecommunication system due to recent earthquake in Gujarat State is expected to be around Rs. 200 crores.

(2)
The extent of damage caused to Telecom network by earthquake is as given below:

Sl. No.	Name of SSA	Number of exchanges affected		Number of buildings affected	
		Departmental	Rented		
1	Bhuj	147	06	141	
2	Rajkot	25	11	16	
3	Surendernagar	03	01	17	
4	Jamnagar	04	09	06	
	Total	179	27	180	

b) The Communication system in Kutchh District was completely paralysed and partially affected in Rajkot, Surendernagar and Jamnagar Districts.

c) Within 8 days of earthquake, more than 90% of network was restored. By 11th Feb.`2001, the Telecom services were restored in all affected 179 exchange areas. The present focus is on restoration of faults in Telecommunication lines and repair/reconstruction of damaged buildings which may take 3-6 months.

d) Twelve officials of BSNL have lost their lives in the earthquake. There is a plan to provideex-gratia and financial assistance to officials of the affected areas who have lost their properties.

e) Concrete measures being taken by the Government to combat such natural calamity in future include :
- Construction of buildings in urban areas taking into account seismic considerations.
- Use of prefab material for construction of buildings in villages which also withstands seismic effects.
- Establishing a stable, reliable communication transmission network.
- Providing cellular mobile services.
- Providing alternate routes for connectivity to the national network.
- Introduction of Wireless in Local Loop (WLL) & High bit-rate Digital Subscriber Line (HDSL) in access network.

(3)

Reply for Postal System

(a) The extent of loss/damage suffered by Postal Buildings:

Region	Departmental		Rented	
	Damaged	Destroyed	Damaged	Destroyed
Ahmedabad	44	-	55	1
Vadodara	34	-	21	-
Rajkot	39	2	49	1
Total	117	2	125	2

Names of destroyed buildings

1. Bachhau PO (Deptl)
2. Bhuj Sorting Office (Deptl.)
3. Rampura (Rented)
4. Memnagar SO (Rented)

(b) Even though as many as 90 Departmental offices and 500 Extra Departmental offices were badly affected in the earthquake, more than 50% offices were made functional by shifting some of them to different buildings and running them in tents within four days of the earthquake. A Mobile post office was also provided at Bhuj town.

(c) Postal services have since been restored in all the affected areas.

(d) The Department provided immediate assistance to the affected employees in terms of supply of necessary items like medicines, eatables, drinking water, blankets, woolen clothes, particularly blankets and ensured round the clock availability of medical and para-medical personnel and medicines. Tents were also supplied in adequate numbers for shelter. The staff were also provided cash assistance.

(e) While planning building structures in future, adequate attention will be paid for making them safe from the point of view of earthquake.